

**DATE:** April 8, 2004

**TO:** **Transportation and Communications Committee**

**FROM:** Charles Keynejad, Senior Regional Planner  
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**RE:** **2004 Regional Transportation Conformity Update  
Information Item**

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**SUMMARY:** SCAG's 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) documents are being submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA – California Division) and the Federal Transit Administration Region IX for their review and action on final conformity determination. The region's conformity status lapses on June 8, 2004 unless the 2004 RTP is in place as a federally approved and conforming Plan to replace the current 2001 RTP. The 2004 RTP conformity finding in the Ventura County and Southeast Modified ozone areas will be issued by SCAG's Executive Director upon the effective date of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) emissions budgets adequacy finding and the findings will be transmitted in a letter to the federal agencies for final action. This is due to the required sequential steps that must be taken by the local air districts, the California Air Resources Board (ARB), and EPA. Most likely, the Ventura County and Southeast Desert areas may encounter a few weeks of conformity lapse after June 8, 2004.

### **Background**

Under federal regulation, conformity finding of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a two-step process, first the respective Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO – SCAG) takes action and then FHWA and FTA in consultation with EPA issue a joint conformity determination. The date of the federal action is the official conformity date.

In compliance with the federal requirement, the 2004 RTP conformity analysis and finding must be conducted by non-attainment/maintenance area (pollutant). The SCAG region contains eleven federal non-attainment/maintenance areas. Many of them are overlapped, four 1-hour ozone areas, five PM10 (particulate matter less than ten micron in size) areas, one CO (carbon monoxide) area and one NO2 (nitrogen dioxide) area. Generally, these non-attainment/maintenance areas are situated in the various air basins (see the attached maps).

### **New Emissions Budgets**

Seven of these eleven non-attainment/maintenance areas have the new Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs)/State Implementation Plans (SIPs) and new emissions budgets. The new emissions budgets were utilized for conformity analysis and finding of the 2004 RTP. The federal regulation requires that only the emissions budgets with EPA's adequacy finding or approval can be used for the conformity determination. EPA has issued the emission adequacy finding for the following five areas: the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB - ozone, CO, PM10, and NO2) and the Coachella Valley PM01 area. EPA's action on these area was published in the March 25, 2004 Federal Register.

The new emissions budgets for the Ventura County and Southeast Desert ozone non-attainment areas are being approved by the local air districts. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) will then submit them to EPA for adequacy finding. This is a procedural issue.

In the areas with emissions budgets, to pass the regional emission tests for conformity, the 2004 RTP regional emissions must be equal or less than the emissions budgets. In the area without the applicable emissions budgets, conformity analysis and finding is based on build no-build tests. To pass the build test the 2004 RTP must generate less regional emissions than the no build scenario. The 2004 RTP conformity analyses in the following areas were conducted using the build/no-build regional emission tests:

- The ozone and PM10 areas in the Imperial County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB)
- The PM10 area of the San Bernardino County portion of the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB)

### **Searles Valley PM10 Area**

There are no transportation projects or programs planned for the Searles Valley PM10 area. This is a less populated area at the northwest corner of San Bernardino County and no growth projected for this area between now and the year 2030. There is no PM10 AQMP/SIP for this area. Therefore, no positive conformity finding can be rendered for this PM10 area.

### **SCAG and Federal Actions on 2004 RTP**

On April 1, 2004, SCAG's Regional Council adopted Resolution Number 04-451-2 which reflects the 2004 RTP compliance with federal and state requirements.

SCAG has determined conformity of the 2004 RTP in all non-attainment and maintenance areas in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), the Coachella Valley PM10 area of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), the San Bernardino County PM10 area of the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB); and the ozone and PM10 areas in the Imperial County portion of SSAB.

The Regional Council has authorized SCAG's Executive Director to make the conformity determination of the 2004 RTP in the Ventura County and the Southeast Desert Modified ozone non-attainment areas upon the effective date of the Environmental Protection Agency's emissions budgets adequacy finding and to transmit the findings in a letter to your agencies for final action.

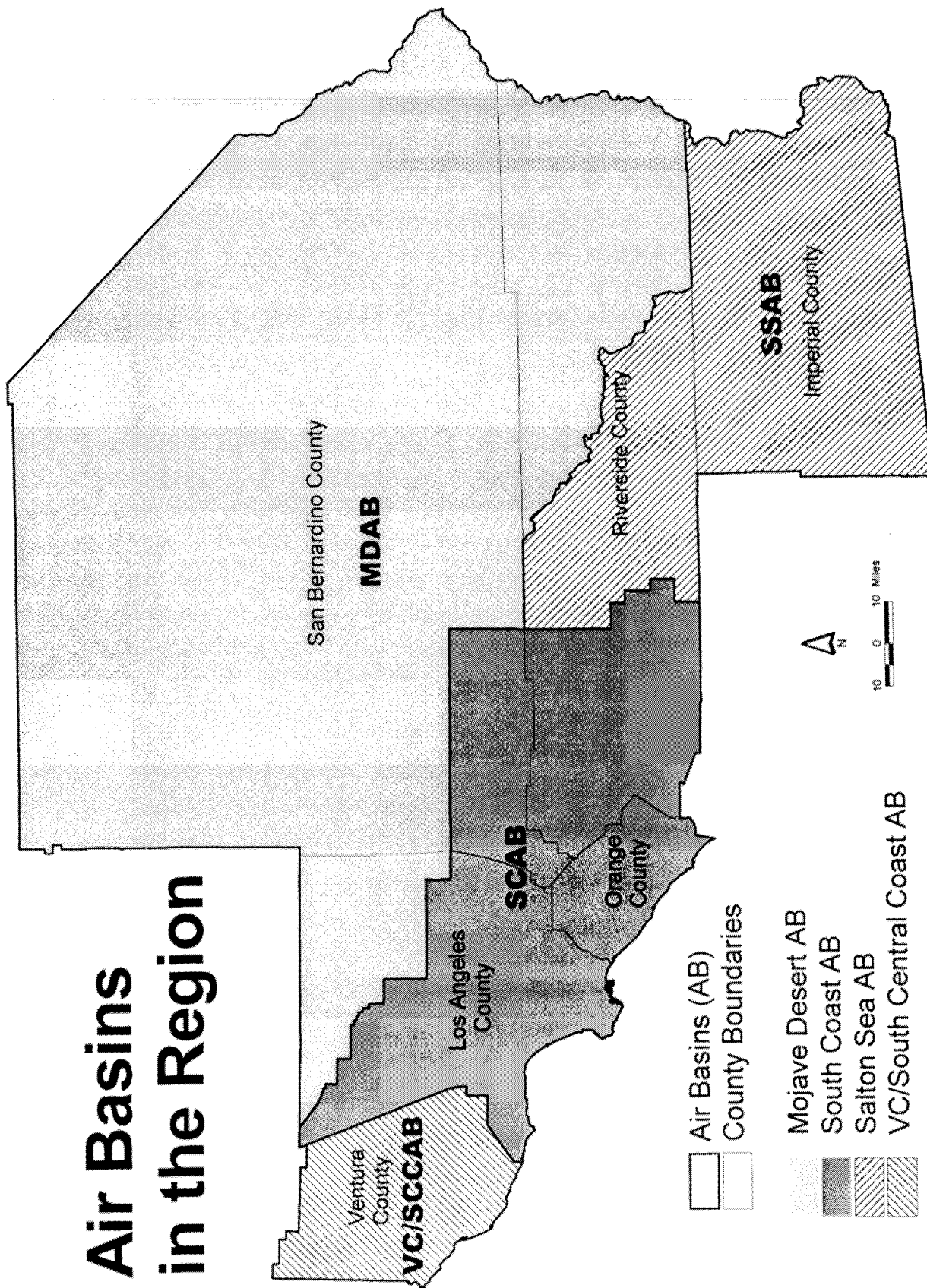
SCAG's 2004 RTP documents are being submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA – California Division) and the Federal Transit Administration Region IX for their review and action on final conformity determination. Conformity of the current 2001 RTP will lapse on June 8, 2004. Upon its approval and the final conformity determination by the Federal Highway (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the 2004 RTP will replace the 2001 RTP as the federally approved and conforming Plan.

It is important to note that most likely, the Ventura County and Southeast Desert area will be out of conformity for a few weeks after June 8. This is due to the sequential steps needed for approval and adequacy finding of the related emissions budgets by the local, state, and federal air agencies. SCAG is monitoring the air agencies' progress on the approval and adequacy finding of the new emissions budgets for these two areas.

Staff will update the Committee members on the federal actions on the 2004 RTP and as well as the adequacy finding of the new emissions budgets in the coming months.

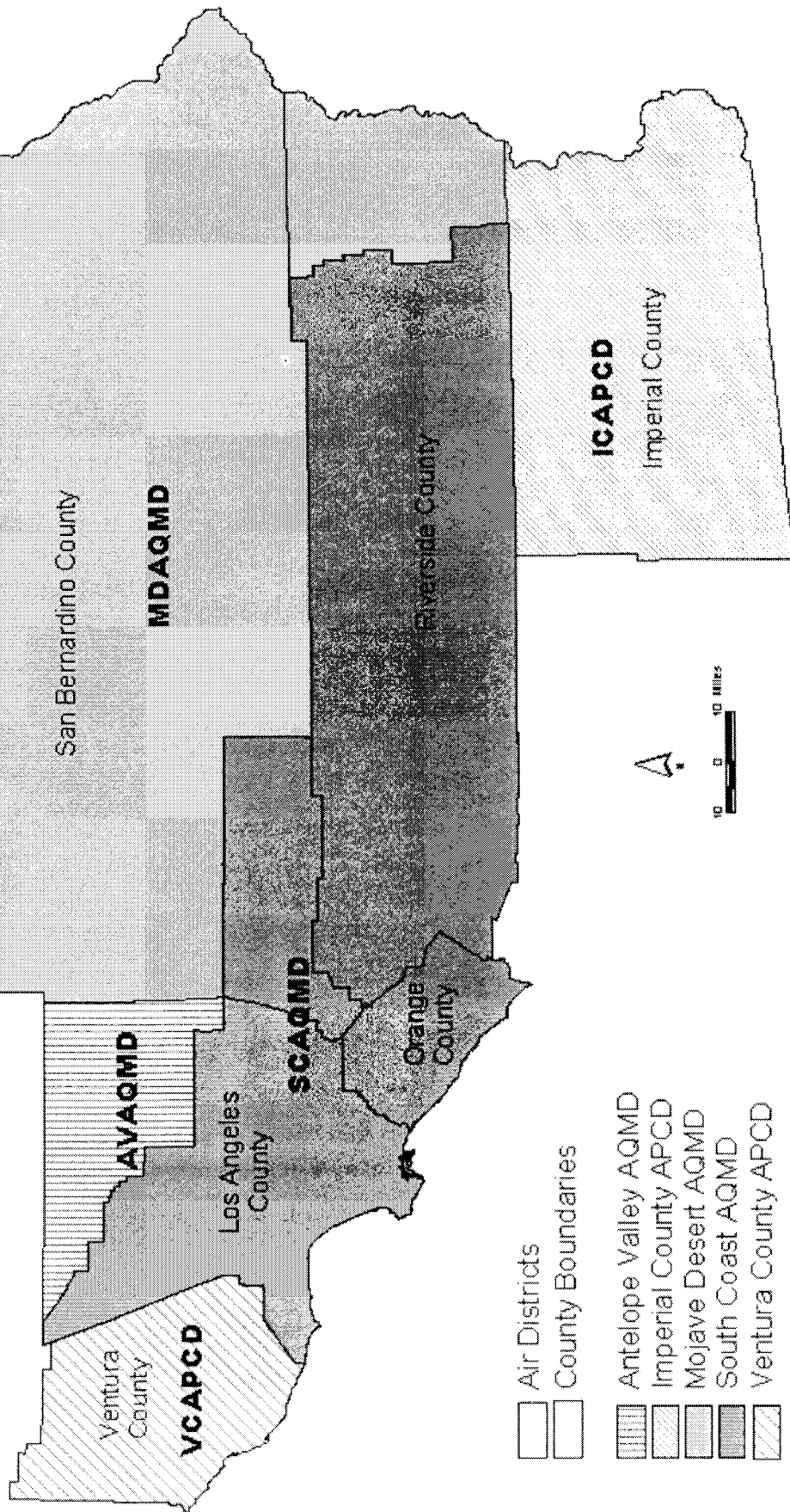


# Air Basins in the Region



Source: Cal Air Resources Board and Air Districts

# Air Districts in the Region



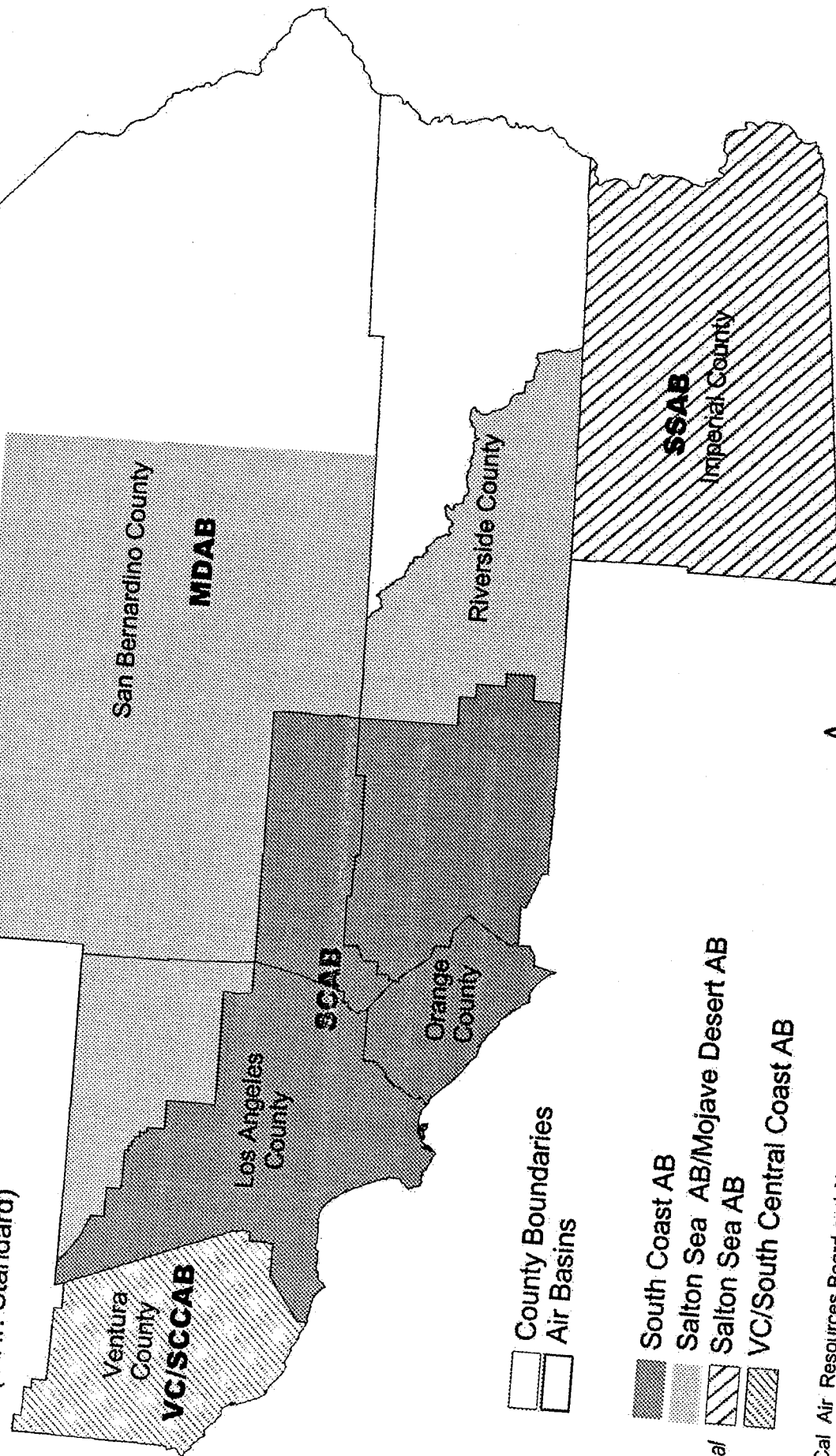
Source: Cal Air Resources Board and Air Districts



**APCD:** Air Pollution Control District  
**AQMD:** Air Quality Management District

# **Federal Non-attainment Areas in the Region**

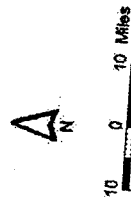
Ozone  
(1-Hr. Standard)



County Boundaries  
Air Basins

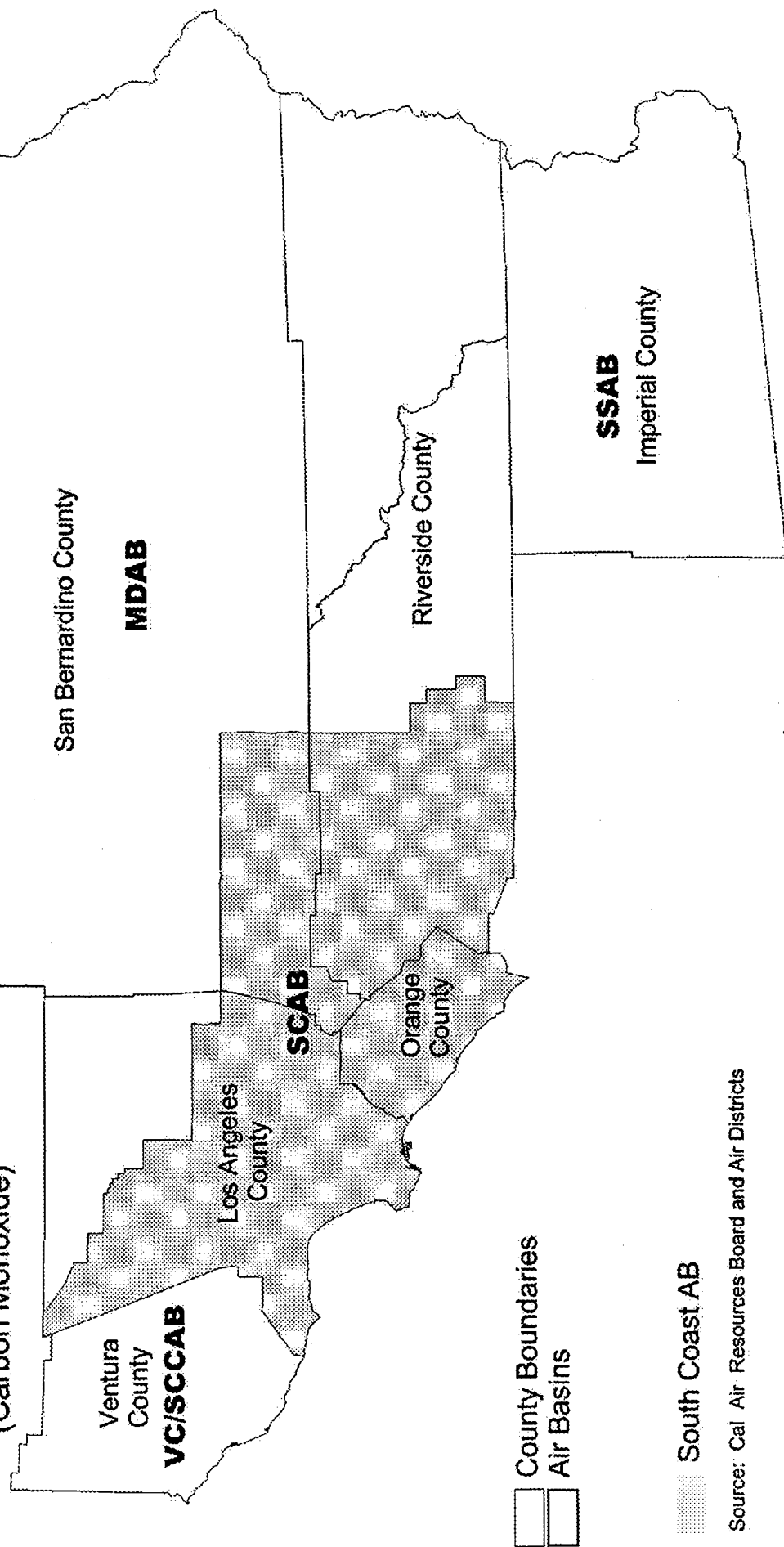
Extreme South Coast AB  
Severe Salton Sea AB/Mojave Desert AB  
Transitional Salton Sea AB  
Severe VC/South Central Coast AB

Source: Cal Air Resources Board and Air Districts



# Federal Non-attainment Areas in the Region

CO  
(Carbon Monoxide)

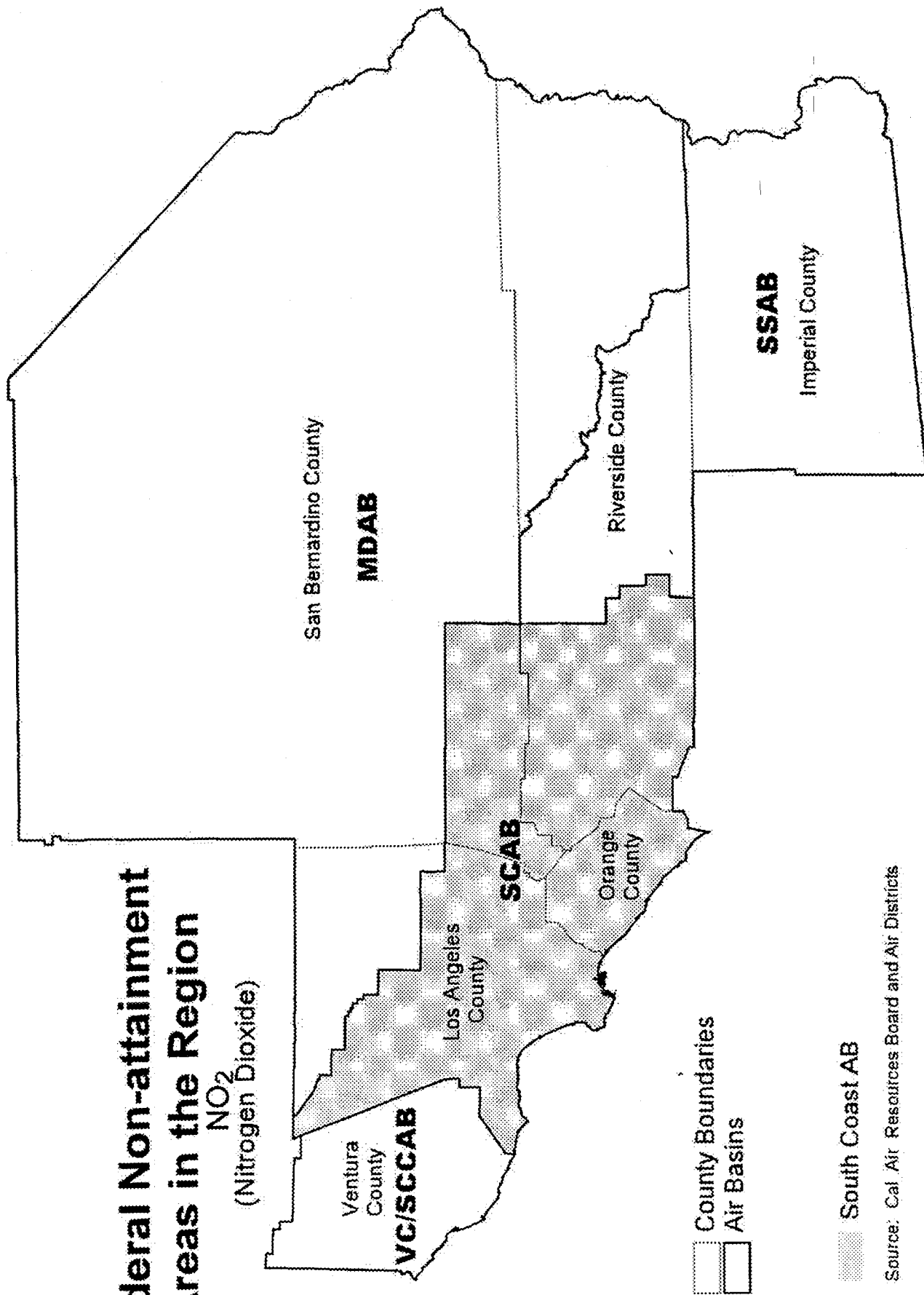


Source: Cal Air Resources Board and Air Districts



# Federal Non-attainment Areas in the Region

NO<sub>2</sub>  
(Nitrogen Dioxide)



County Boundaries  
Air Basins

South Coast AB

Source: Cal Air Resources Board and Air Districts



10 0 10 Miles

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

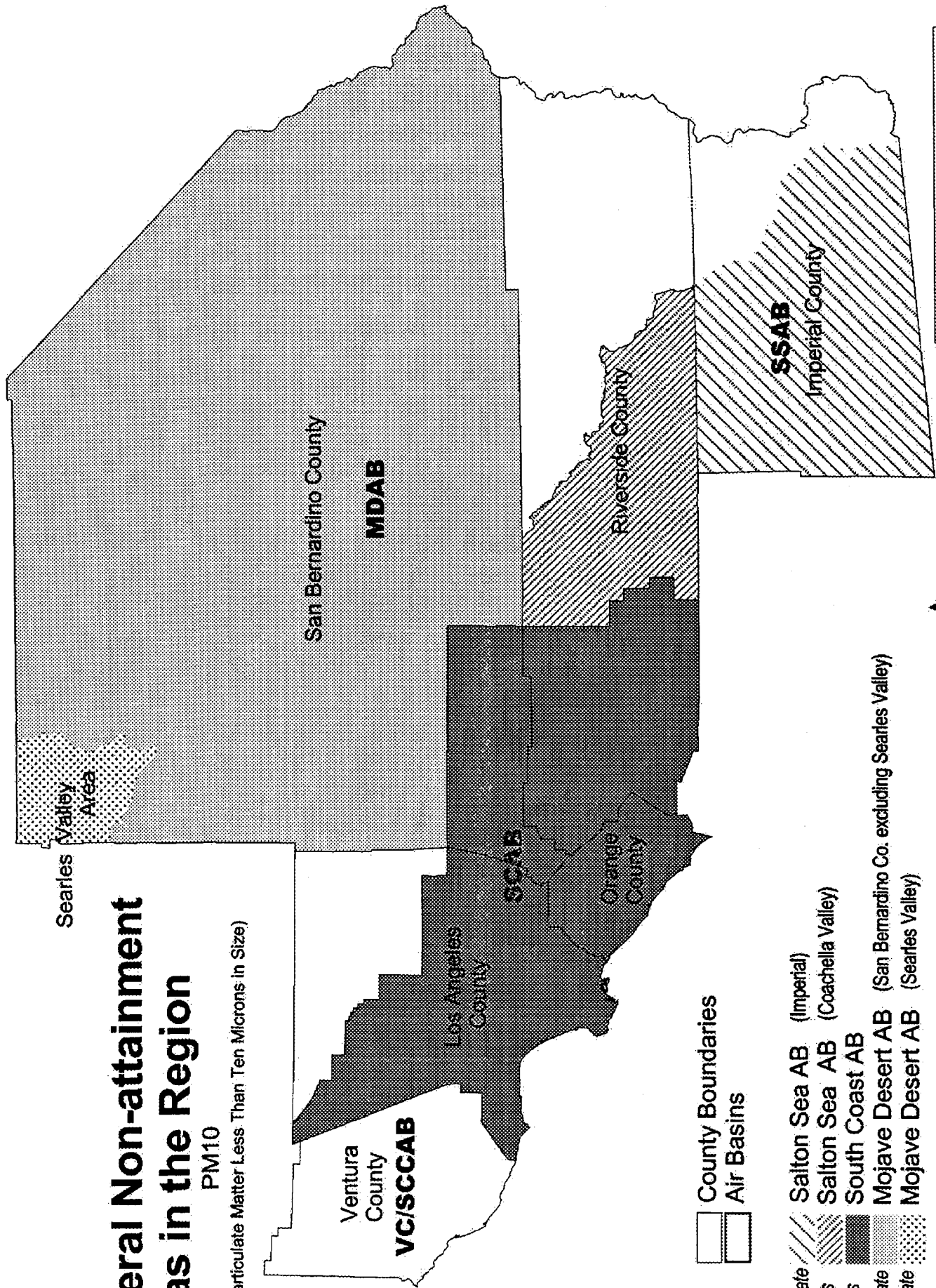
October 2003



# Federal Non-attainment Areas in the Region

PM10

(Particulate Matter Less Than Ten Microns in Size)



County Boundaries  
Air Basins

Moderate Salton Sea AB (Imperial)  
Serious Salton Sea AB (Coachella Valley)  
Serious South Coast AB  
Moderate Mojave Desert AB (San Bernardino Co. excluding Searles Valley)  
Moderate Mojave Desert AB (Searles Valley)

Source: Cal Air Resources Board and Air Districts



10 0 10 Miles